

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 257464 TOSEC 170003

NODIS
CHEROKEE

FOLLOWING REPEAT ALGIERS 3211 ACTION SECSTATE 30 OCT 75
QUOTE
S E C R E T ALGIERS 3211

NODIS/CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, SS, MO, SP, AG
SUBJ: SPANISH SAHARA: PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE'S VIEWS
REF: ALGIERS 3210

1. AT 5:00 P.M. TODAY RECEIVED SUMMONS TO GO TO
PRESIDENCY IMMEDIATELY TO SEE BOUMEDIENE. HE WAS IN GRIM
MOOD AND CAME RIGHT TO THE POINT. SAID HE HAD CALLED ME
TO CONVEY URGENT MESSAGE TO YOU, WHICH WAS THAT SITUATION
IN AREA RAPIDLY DETERIORATING BECAUSE OF SPANISH SAHARA
QUESTION AND ACTION BY US WAS REQUIRED TO SAVE IT.
ALGERIA HAD FOLLOWED POLICY OF RESTRAINT AND MODERATION
BUT TIME HAD COME TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT THAT POLICY HAD
BEEN WISE. PROOF WOULD BE ACTIONS OF U.S., WHICH MUST
TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT HASSAN FROM PROCEEDING WITH HIS
MARCH. HE KNEW THAT WE HAD MAINTAINED A POSITION OF
NEUTRALITY, BUT FOR US TO SAY AT THIS POINT WE WERE NEUTRAL

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WOULD NO LONGER WASH. NO ONE IN REGION WOULD BELIEVE

THAT HASSAN WAS GOING INTO THE SAHARA WITHOUT OUR BLESSING.

2. I ATTEMPTED TO INTERJECT AT THIS POINT BUT HE WAVED ME ASIDE AND CONTINUED, SAYING THAT GREEN MARCH THREATENED NOT ONLY STABILITY OF MAHGREB BUT OF ARAB WORLD AS A WHOLE, AND IF WE WERE SERIOUSLY INTERESTED, AS WE SAID WE WERE, IN STABILITY, WE WOULD TAKE ACTION AT THIS POINT. IF SOMETHING WAS NOT DONE PROBLEM WOULD AVE RAMIFICATIONS FAR BEYOND SIMPLE ALGERIAN-MOROCCAN DISPUTE. EVERYONE'S INTERESTS WOULD SUFFER. HE WAS ASKING BOUTEFLIKA TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOU TO CONVEY SAME MESSAGE BUT HE WANTED TO BE SURE THAT YOU GOT IT ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.

3. I SAID OUR CAPABILITIES AS FAR AS HASSAN WERE CONCERNED WERE SEVERELY LIMITED. HASSAN HAD OPENED THE BOTTLE AND NOW COULD NOT PUT THE GENIE BACK INTO IT. BOUMEDIENE SAID PROBLEM COULD BE SOLVED HONORABLY FOR HASSAN. SPANISH WERE PREPARED TO GET OUT AT ANY TIME. QUESTION WAS WHAT REGIME TOOK OVER FROM THEM. ALGERIANS SIMPLY COULD NOT ACCEPT THAT THIS BE SETTLED BY INVASION. WALDHEIM HAD MADE SOME PROPOSALS WHICH WERE NOW BEING DISCUSSED IN MADRID. I ASKED IF ALGERIANS ACCEPTED WALDHEIM PROPOSAL. HE SAID, YES, AND THEY WERE GOING TO ANNOUNCE THEIR ACCEPTANCE TOMORROW. SPANIARDS ALSO ACCEPTED THEM. MAURITANIANS HAD SAID THEYWOULD GO ALONG IF UNABLE TO RESOLVE PROBLEM THROUGH BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS. THERE REMAINED MOROCCO. WHAT WAS REQUIRED NOW WAS A LITTLE PUSH FROM THE U.S. TO MAKE HASSAN ACCEPT THE WALDHEIM PROPOSAL.

4. I SAID I WOULD CONVEY MESSAGE TO YOU IMMEDIATELY BUT THAT I MUST REPEAT THAT OUR CAPABILPTIES WITH HASSAN WERE LIMITED. KING HAD INDICATED TO ATHERTON THAT HE WAS ON ROAD FROM WHICH IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO TURN BACK. BOUMEDIENE SAID, QUOTE THEN LET HIM CONTINUE UNQUOTE, AND TERMINATED MEETING.

5. COMMENT: AS NOTED ABOVE, BOUMEDIENE WAS IN GRIM MOOD. DO NOT KNOW WHAT HE WILL DO IF GREEN MARCH CONTINUES. HIS MILITARY AND POLITICAL OPTIONS ARE LIMITED. HE CAN SUPPORT GUERILLA MOVEMENT IN SAHARA AND SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES IN SECRET

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MOROCCO AND CAN CAUSE CONSIDERABLE TROUBLE, BUT HE IS UNLIKELY TO TAKE ON MOROCCAN ARMY AT THIS POINT. HIS FRUSTRATION, HOWEVER, WILL LEAD HIM TO STRIKE OUT AT OTHER TARGETS, INCLUDING US. ESTIMATING DAMAGE HE CAN OR WILL INFILCT DIFFICULT. WE THINK HE UNLIKELY CUT PRIVATE ECONOMIC TIES, WHICH VERY IMPORTANT TO ALGERIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, BUT HE WILL START PLAYING SPOILING ROLE IN MIDDLE EAST AND WILL SHARPLY REVERSE TREND OF IMPROVEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS. THIS

IMPLICIT IN HIS REMARKS IN PARA 2.

6. MORE IMPORTANT IN LONG RUN IS FACT THAT IF GREEN MARCH GOES FORWARD A NUMBER OF PEOPLE ARE GOING TO BE KILLED AND NORTH AFRICA LIKELY BE DE-STABILIZED FOR SOME TIME. SITUATION MAY WELL GET OUT OF HAND, WITH DEMANDS FOR OUR INTERVENTION BY ONE SIDE OR ANOTHER PUTTING US IN AN INCREASINGLY EMBARRASSING POSITION. IN OTHER WORDS, MARCH IS NOT GOING TO SETTLE PROBLEM, BUT ONLY MAKE IT WORSE. I THINK IT VERY MUCH IN OUR INTEREST TO FIND WAY OUT FOR HASSAN. ALGERIAN ACCEPTANCE OF WALDHEIM PROPOSAL OFFERS ONE POSSIBILITY. IT MAY ONLY DELAY THE AGONY, BUT IT MAY ALSO GIVE ENOUGH TIME FOR PARTIES TO WORK OUT SOLUTION BETWEEN THEM.

7. I THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT IF, AS BOUMEDIENE SAYS, SPANISH ACCEPTED WALDHEIM PROPOSAL, WE ALSO SUPPORT THAT PROPOSAL IN SECURITY COUNCIL.

8. RECOMMEND ABOVE BE REPEATED MADRID, MOUAKCHOTT, RABAT AND USUN.
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UNQUOTE
INGERSOLL

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